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ABSTRACT

This guide, comprised of three lessons, is designed to train teachers to select children's books with a multicultural perspective. The preliminary lesson introduces and describes the learning unit and states the objectives. Objectives are to understand the importance of judging books for their inclusion of minority culture experience based on current research, to understand the importance of including materials relevant to the experience and culture of people of many cultures in all classrooms, and to develop skills in analyzing the illustrations and written content of children's books in terms of the perspective of different cultures. Lesson I presents guidelines, exercises, and worksheets for analyzing illustrations. Cartoons and illustrations are included. In Lesson II participants analyze a child's book for its similarities to and differences from their own personal experiences and from the perspective of a particular culture. The example provided focuses on a black perspective. Teachers read an article, classify the information into cultural group categories, and participate in group discussions about the article. Also, the participant uses an assessment instrument to analyze the written content of children's books. An article, Black Perspective in Books for Children, and an example of a written content analysis of a book are included in appendices. (KC)

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SELECTING CHILDREN'S BOOKS WITH
MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE



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Ethnic Heritage Studies Program

from the unit "Selecting Children's Books
with a Black Perspective" by Francione N. Lewis

Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development
San Francisco, California
November, 1977

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The original unit from which this was adapted is part of the Flexible Learning System set of materials also developed at the Far West Laboratory under the direction of Masako N. Tanaka, with support from the National Institute of Education.

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PRELIMINARY LESSON: INTRODUCTION TO THE LEARNING UNIT

Objective One:

The learner identifies his/her own understanding of, and reads research evidence that supports, the need for materials reflecting people from different cultures in the classroom for young children.

Objective Two:

The learner clarifies what is expected of him/her in the unit and what he/she expects by reading an overview of the course, stating his/her aspirations as they relate to the materials, and discussing with the instructor to what extent and in what way those hopes can be realized during the learning experience.

Outcome:

Each learner makes a statement about the reasons for undertaking the work, using his/her own preferred communication style.

Instructions

1. Look at the cartoon, "Luther," and read the quotation below it. Then participate in

a group discussion while answering the questions on the following page.



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Luther From Inner City, Paul S. Eriksson,
Inc.

"...White children spend most of their reading time in a mirror reflection of themselves,

while Black children spend their time looking into that mirror."*

*Latimer Bettye, *Starting Out Right Choosing Books About Black People for Young Children Preschool Through Third Grade*, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Bulletin No. 2314, 1972, p. 24.

a. Describe what you see when you look into the mirror.

b. If that mirror became a camera and followed you around all day, what would it record?

c. In what way do you suspect the reflection in the mirror to be different for white children than for children of another culture?

d. What are some of the images that children's books reflect?

e. Why is it important for children to see images of different cultures?

2. As an example of the needs of one particular culture, the instructor will assign readings or summarize research evidence that points to the fact that children of all cultures need an expanded reflection of the world. The summary may include:
 - a. Early racial recognition and self-acceptance vs. racism and denial.
 - b. Enhancement of children's self-concept through exposure to a variety of people and different cultures.
 - c. Expanding children's oral reading skills through the use of material that shows multicultural backgrounds and experience in familiar and realistic settings.
3. Now, in your own preferred style, write, verbalize, or draw a statement that reflects your understanding of the importance of including material about people of other cultures in the classroom library.
4. Share your statement with the other learners in your group; use the space below to list the ideas that came up which you may not have considered.
5. List what you hope to get out of this learning unit.

Unit Objectives

Seldom, if ever, does teacher training include important skills that can lead to the reform of book selection and to better use of existing materials. Therefore this learning unit will help you analyze books as a means of choosing appropriate materials about the Black Experience for preschool and primary children.

Teachers and teaching assistants are often faced with children who actively dislike or are uninterested in school, or who soon grow to be that way. The content of textbooks has been cited as a primary cause of this problem. The California Association of School Psychologists and Psychometrists issued a statement in 1970, pointing out that school curriculum is often not relevant or familiar to Black students. According to the Association, this gap between the students' experiences and the curriculum contributes to a dislike of, or lack of interest in school

and to subsequent failure. Teachers, moreover, are in a key position to analyze books. In many schools, they are given the responsibility of selecting their own books from a list of specified publications.

As a result of this learning unit, you can expect to:

Understand the importance of judging books for their inclusion of minority culture experience, for all children, based on current research.

Be sensitive to the importance of including in any classroom materials relevant to the experience and culture of people of many cultures.

Develop skill in analyzing the illustrations and written content of children's books in terms of the perspective of different cultures.

Description

This learning unit, which has two lessons and several experiences within each, is designed so that you may work through it on your own or while participating in a course with other learners. It is created so that it can be personalized for you, by encouraging you to bring your own understandings to bear on the issues that are raised and by requesting that you select tasks and materials that you believe will be meaningful to you within the guidelines of the assignments.

Lesson One focuses on illustrations in children's books. You read a handbook lesson. Then you apply what you have learned (1) by using content-analysis skills to analyze a book that you select and (2) by selecting books that fit some guidelines that are given. The lesson contains book-evaluation forms and instructions. Moreover, a group session is provided to allow you the opportunity to think about the information and to share your ideas and your books with other learners.

Lesson Two is designed to provide background for analyzing the written content of children's books by using the perspective of a particular culture. You will participate in a series of four group experiences which guide you toward understanding the uniqueness of a culture's perspective. You will be provided with articles that provide information about different cultural formation about different cultural perspectives and children's literature. You will conclude this lesson by suggesting guidelines for looking at books while using particular cultural perspective and using an analysis instrument to analyze one or more books.

MOVING TOWARD A CLASSROOM
THAT SUPPORTS CULTURAL PLURALISM

	Representation	(Potential for) Relevance
Personal (the child)	There are books available which are appropriate to the age level of the children	Available books contain family composition Neighborhoods Interest and Customs, etc. Familiar to the children in the classroom. Children write own stories. Each child sees, expresses own reality
Ethnic Group	Books are available which depict the ethnic group of the children in the class The ethnic group of each child is represented Books are available about different ethnic groups	The available books contain illustrations, values, customs, goals and are written by authors of the ethnic group being depicted The content and manner of representation of each ethnic group is from the perspective of that group Books are available which demonstrate people of different ethnic groups interacting in positive ways
Cultural Pluralism	Special holidays with an ethnic focus are recognized Different ethnic groups are represented	Materials depicting different ethnic groups are available on a daily basis to be incorporated in learning activities Different ethnic groups are represented with equity, on a daily basis

Note: Most examples above are books. However, the ideas are applicable to other materials and learning experiences.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE LEARNER

TO KNOW

Rationale
for multi-
cultural
materials

Criteria for the
inclusion or ex-
clusion of illus-
trations or written
content from the
perspective of
different cultures

Historical Over-
view of the
experience of
a particular culture.

TO DO

Develop own
guidelines for
book selection
based on material
read

Identify examples
in children's lit-
erature, which meet
established guide-
lines and criteria
for illustrations
and written content

Use instru-
ments with
a standard
degree of
accuracy

Select books that meet
the criteria & guide-
lines incorporated in
the learning unit

LESSON ONE: ILLUSTRATIONS REFLECTING PEOPLE OF A PARTICULAR CULTURE



"For Children, Books begin with Pictures"

Mary Hill Arbuthnot
(excerpt from Children and Books, 1964)

ILLUSTRATIONS REFLECTING PEOPLE OF A PARTICULAR CULTURE

Objectives

1. You become aware of some guidelines for depicting people of different cultures in illustrations by reading material that is provided.
2. You use the guidelines for illustrations as the basis for analyzing a book and selecting a range of books depicting different cultures.
3. You develop content-analysis skills by following directions for the book analysis.

Outcome 1: You will be able to determine whether or not a book adequately represents people of different cultures in illustrations.

Outcome 2: You will be able to select a range of books that together depict some diversity within the experience of particular cultures and that omit stereotypes.

Introduction

By the time children are four years old, they are excitingly aware of all they see and hear around them. Their inquisitive delight at the details of a flower or an ant does not surpass their recognition of the races of characters portrayed in books and in other pictorial detail. It is with this issue that we raise our concern about what they see in the illustrations found in literature about people of different cultures. For among the wealth of available material, either through exclusion or misrepresentations within the material, children are faced with misinformation about people who are different from themselves in the world around them. In this lesson you will be looking at both how well or poorly people of different cultures are included in material and the way in which they are included. You'll become concerned with excluding books that contain illustrations which stereotyp people of different cultures.

Instructions:

1. Read and discuss "Illustrations Showing People of Different Cultures" starting on the next pages. You may want to underline, use question marks, or make notes in the margin to identify points in the material that:
 - a. you believe are very important
 - b. you've had some related personal experience with that you would like to share with the group;
 - c. you disagree with (jot down why);
 - d. you don't understand and want more information about.

2. Then do the two exercises immediately following.
3. Complete the related task described on page 32.

Illustrations Showing People of Different Cultures

To develop an interest in books, young children are generally first given picture books with little or no text. The natural inquisitiveness of children leads them to explore the various parts of these books. They soon discover that pictures have meaning. As children have further experiences with books, they look with more understanding at the details of pictures. In other words, children learn to "read" pictures long before they learn to read words. Hence, to young children (especially prereaders and beginning readers) the main value and the main interest appeal of a book comes from its illustrations.

The importance of illustrations in children's books is quickly apparent. Today the artist-illustrator has a major role in the production of children's books. His work determines to a large extent whether or not the books will sell. In fact, visual elements now play a more significant role in books and magazines for all ages.

However, high-quality printing and color too often lead many parents, teachers, and librarians to make hasty and uncritical choices of children's books.

Hundreds of books are now sold on the strength of their bright, colorful pictures alone. Some of these books are worthwhile; but too many of them are poorly written. In many the pictures are not so good as they should be. For despite brilliant colors, children look for familiar details in pictures. Thus, illustrations in children's books should be more than decorative. Their purpose must be evident and their meaning clear.

Textbooks and resource books are tools used to teach children to read. The illustrations in these books are vitally important in capturing and maintaining the interest of pupils. Pictures help interpret characters and situations in the stories. However, to be truly interesting, the books must show people with whom the pupils can readily identify; this fact is especially important for many children of different cultures who do not come to school with experiences that the school supports. Their interest in books can be stimulated and kept alive by books showing people and situations that fit their own background.

As children thumb, casually or intently, through the pages of literature, they are saturated, through the images they see, with information that society feels is important. It is our basic assumption that the creations of authors and illustrators presumably reflect society's values. And, since racial discrimination has existed in a seriously enough degree to cause major laws to be passed guaranteeing people of different cultures basic human rights and freedom from discriminatory practices, recent reading materials have started to reflect the tenor of these times.

Until the past few years, nearly all children's books showed all people as white in their illustrations. Of the few integrated books, most showed

only one or two dark faces in a crowd. These illustrations reinforced attitudes of racial superiority in white children and attitudes of racial inferiority in other children. Including only one racial group, especially in textbooks, and omitting others demonstrates that one group is thought to be greater than the other. Moreover, it is quite unnatural for people of other minority groups to be completely omitted from textbooks that are supposed to teach democratic living.

As a result of much pressure and protest, there have been some changes and some improvements in books in recent years. One or two brown faces have become more common in textbook illustrations. Although these brown figures are supposedly pictures of people of other cultures, they can be misleading because they seldom show actual physical characteristics. There are obvious problems when only colors are changed in book figures. For example, a young Black girl, looking at an integrated textbook, was asked what differences she noticed between her old textbook and the new integrated one. She replied that "some of the kids in the new textbook are sunburned." These "sunburned" kids are supposedly Black children; but despite the brown skin color, this girl, and probably other Black children, failed to identify the figures as Black people.

The problem for Black children is further complicated by the fact that light-skinned Black children feel left out when reading a textbook that shows only so-called average-looking Blacks. If Black children are to relate easily to pictures of Black people, and non-Black children are to have opportunities to gain accurate information, a book or a range of books must be provided depicting Black people realistically. Therefore, we would expect to see Black characters with varying skin hues (from light to dark complexions), with a range of hair colors, hair textures, and styles, with variations in lip, eye, and nose formations and in body builds. Reflecting this diversity within the appearances of Black people not only is authentic but increases the possibility for an individual Black child to see himself represented in the material which he is experiencing.

The same range of realistic skin hues and features would need to be reflected in books about children of other ethnic groups. Another major concern in evaluating these integrated texts is the extent to which persons of different cultures are shown as responsible, contributing members of society. Illustrations rarely place individuals of ethnic minorities in positions of authority. Too often token integration is achieved simply by placing one or two dark faces in the background. In order to establish in the minds of young children the important contributions and achievements of people of different cultures, they must see them as central figures in society rather than as mere onlookers. The central characters are people in the picture whom you notice first, who are usually in a central or prominent position, and who frequently are in active rather than passive postures. More than one person in an illustration may be classified as a central character. For example, illustrations often show an interaction of people, such as a conversation; in this case, both of the people involved in the conversation are central characters.

Currently we continue to be showered with material from the media that is either racially offensive or disastrously misrepresentative. In a recent issue of a movie review guide, an article entitled "Movie Stereotypes Under Fire" details the objections of the Hispanic, Asian, Native American, and Black peoples to movies of the 1930's and 1940's. These films reeked of ethnic stereotypes. Many of those films once perceived as "outstanding" have been withdrawn from the television market, e.g., films depicting Black characters as being rolling-eyed cowards or dull-witted, (as you may remember from old Shirley Temple films).

It is crucial that books that perpetuate myths and demeaning exaggerations be eliminated from our schools and libraries. A stereotype is an oversimplified or biased way of thinking, especially about persons and social groups. (For example, thinking of American slaves as being always obedient and docile is a myth, since history shows that many different ways of protesting bondage were the actual reality.) Just about everyone agrees that stereotypes are undesirable. However, some of the objections voiced against stereotypes may be somewhat in error. That is, it is necessary to express some common features or make a classification system. If we were to refuse to make any generalizations about events, we would deprive ourselves of some very useful knowledge. For example, if we did not stereotype a traffic light, we might fail to realize that traffic crosses the intersection when the facing light is green. In the same way we may fail to acknowledge that Black people throughout the world have a collective history of being raped from their motherland and made bonded people.

Of course, not all generalizations about categories are useful. The key question is: Does the generalization fit the facts? Accurate generalizations about persons and events are valuable in that they let us anticipate future events from past experiences.

Perhaps the most outstanding and lasting stereotypes are of the ethnic type. The accuracy of these stereotypes is particularly difficult to determine because, for the most part, they are attitudes that cannot be proven true or false. Consider the following typical racial stereotypes: "Blacks are lazy" and "Chinese are superstitious." Can you even imagine facts that would establish the truth or falsity of such stereotypes? By making such statements, someone is saying in effect, that Blacks have behavior patterns and Chinese have beliefs that are not accepted in American culture. So they are labeled "lazy" and "superstitious."

Stereotypes are objectionable because of their ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism is the belief that the race and culture of one's own group is superior to that of all other groups and that the values, beliefs, and behaviors of another group are not equally valuable to us. Another objection to stereotypes is that they suggest that all people within an ethnic group have inborn and unchangeable psychological or social characteristics. Finally, stereotypes are dangerous because when we always show that we expect some behavior, we may force someone to behave as we anticipated. For example, studies show that a child who is constantly told that he is bad is likely to act "bad."

Stereotyping occurs in two forms in children's literature found in the classroom or public library: (1) by omission; i.e., presentation of such limited information that a broader, more accurate picture is ignored or (2) by commission; i.e., inclusion of material that is either demeaning to the reality of a particular people's experience or is blatantly offensive.

Guidelines

To avoid stereotyping caused by omission, you should look for children's books with illustrations that include the following guidelines:

1. Adults of a particular culture are shown in a Variety of Occupational, Labor and Responsibility Roles--for example, Asian females in Professional Roles.

We believe that the books a child reads should give him support for his own way of living and for the beliefs and values that are fostered in his living environment. Moreover, a book should take him beyond his own, unique experience and expose him to the range of options and methods that other people like himself have used. Consequently, role models should be depicted in illustrations. The importance of role models in shaping children's behavior is supported by research. Furthermore, many parents can testify to the fact that their children imitate their own behavior.

A major failure of books is to not provide a variety of role models for students of different cultures. We are concerned that both minority and non-minority children begin to see people of different cultures in a variety of occupational and community roles.

Many factors may be considered in selecting an occupation--interest, aptitudes, knowledge of other occupations, etc. Other factors, such as prevailing racial attitudes toward occupations, tend to complicate the selection process. These attitudes generally suggest that persons of minority cultures are not qualified for or able to enter into certain "high-prestige" occupations. Books that stereotype male and female adults of particular ethnic groups in particular occupations fix attitudes about those occupations in the minds of all pupils. For example, pupils may believe that the only occupations open to Chicanos are the ones in which they are shown.

Community role models, as defined in this lesson, are persons of a particular culture who work toward wiping out some of the problems in the community; for example, tutors, freedom-school teachers, and legal and medical assistants.

2. A Variety of Interior/Exterior Settings that Reflect Conditions of the Minority Population as a Whole

Living environments for people of different cultures should reflect, through artistic interpretation, the vast variations present throughout the various regions of the country and the differing economic circumstances in which people exist.

3. Multi-ethnic Characters with Facial Features and Body Postures that Are "Alive" and Demonstrate Expressions Compatible with the Situation

It is unfortunate when illustrations depict individuals or groups as statues, as being emotionless, or as a meaningless blur. We should look for illustrations which, by depicting human customs, enable children to become involved in the accompanying story. Therefore, warmth, lively expression, and the ability to exude joy and a celebration for living should be seen, as well as the necessary pain, concern, and effort which emerge through unhappiness, loneliness, struggle, and hard work. People should appear to have a purpose or aim. And the character images should demonstrate these facts of human experience.

4. Characters of a particular culture with Varying Skin Hues (from light to dark complexions), with a range of hair colors, hair textures, and styles, with variations in lip, eye, and nose formations and in body builds
5. Illustrations should avoid the stereotypes that are overtly or subtly inherent in depictions of a particular culture, such as the following:
 - a. Adults shown just standing, sitting, and gazing aimlessly
 - b. Characters only in non-central or non-active roles
 - c. Characters who appear unjustifiably fearful, comical, festive, or humorous when situations don't warrant it
 - d. Characters who appear weak, kneeling, subservient, dumb, timid, scared, rigid, or lifeless
 - e. Color references which are negative (e.g., Black outfits for Criminals).
 - f. Characters Who Appear All Alike, with Unidentifiable Characteristics or Individuality.
 - g. All mothers are depicted as bulky, obese physical figures
 - h. All fathers are absent in family and community setting.

You should not expect to find the variations described in the guidelines within any one book. Consequently, the range of books available to children should illustrate the kind of variety that is important for them to see.

"Pictures" Exercises

Introduction: On the next several pages are exercises designed to increase your understanding of the information discussed in "illustrations Showing People of Different Cultures." The focus is on analyzing material for its compatibility with what we expect to see in children's literature. In the first exercise you are expected to analyze a book for whether or not people of a particular culture are included, to what extent they are included, and for how realistic they seem. The second exercise may be an individual or group project to find books that illustrate diversity among people of a particular culture offensive illustrations. Accompanying each exercise is a set of instructions that detail the materials you will need to complete the task.



(l. to r.) tutor and student



(l) Professional basketball player



(standing) hair stylist from Bayviewer, Vol. III, No. 24, May, 1969, page 16. - Lelo Associates, Berkeley, Calif.



(l. to r.) dentist and doctor from Ebony
Vol. XXV No. 6, April, 1970, page 45, Johnson
Publishing Company, Inc., Chicago, Illinois



(l. to r.) sons and father from
Ebony, Vol. XXV No. 2, December,
1969, page 182. Johnson
Publishing Company, Inc.,
Chicago, Illinois.



(r. to l.) mother, daughter, and
grandmother from Sepia, Vol. 19
No. 3, March 1970, page 77. Sepia
Publishing Co., Fort Worth, Texas.

Exercise A: Analyzing Illustrations in Books

Objective:

To determine to what extent a book includes people of a particular culture, in central positions, who appear realistic--by analyzing the book using an evaluation instrument.

Materials Needed:

1. A book of your choice appropriate for the age range you teach.
2. Checklist Form, Evaluation Worksheet, Illustration Scoresheet.

Instructions:

1. Select the book you want to analyze from the viewpoint of one particular culture.
2. Skim the book quickly to become familiar with it. Use it if it has evidence of representing people of the particular culture you wish to study.
3. You will be using three specific techniques for analyzing books:

Technique 1: Determine if there is an adequate percentage of illustrations showing people of the particular culture.

Technique 2: Determine if there is an adequate percentage of illustrations showing people of the particular culture as central characters.

Technique 3: Determine if the illustrations reflect the physical features of people of the particular culture.
4. In order to learn these techniques, you will need some preliminary information. Use the checklist for data-collecting activities which will provide you with the information needed.
5. Use the evaluation worksheet to calculate the percentages and their adequacy.
6. Then complete Technique 3 by answering the questions and recording the summary of those answers on the Evaluation Worksheet.
7. Use the Illustration Scoresheet as a guide to determine if the book you chose is appropriate to use with young children. Reject the book for children's use if it is in any way demeaning to people of the particular culture.

Technique 1 Instructions:

- A. Starting from the title page of the book, count each illustration that includes people; ignore those illustrations that include only houses, animals, cars, etc. At this time, do not consider the race of the people in the illustrations.

Although this assignment may seem quite tedious, it should give you keener insight into the way the book depends on illustrations and the extent to which these illustrations show people. The number you obtain, from counting the illustrations which have people in them, will be used in determining whether or not there is an adequate percentage of illustrations that show people of a particular culture.

- B. After you complete your count, record on the Evaluation Worksheet the number of pictures that show people. When your count has been recorded, go on to Instruction C.
- C. Start again at the title page of your book. List the page number of each illustration that shows people of the particular culture. The page numbers should be listed on the Checklist.

Technique 2 Instructions:

Note: You may have some difficulty in deciding whether or not some illustrations are of Black people, tanned white people, or some other ethnic group. When possible, refer to the text in order to make an accurate judgment. However, since the trend in textbooks is to avoid mentioning race (and to provide only multiracial pictures), you may get little help from the text of the book. Therefore, in most cases you will have to rely mainly on skin color as the major index of race.

- A. Classify each of the illustrations which include people of the particular culture as either showing them as central characters or showing them as non-central characters. Place a check in the "Central" and "Non-Central" columns in the checklist, according to the following definitions:

1. Central Characters:

The central characters are people in the picture whom you notice first, who are usually in a central or prominent position, and who frequently are in active rather than passive postures. More than one person in an illustration may be classified as a central character. For example, often illustrations show an interaction of people, such as conversation; in this case, both of the people involved in the conversation are central characters.

2. Non-Central Characters

All persons in the picture who are not central will be called non-central. For example, bystanders watching two people talking to each other are non-central characters.

Reminder:

Your analysis of whether people of the particular culture are shown as central or non-central characters is important in determining whether token integration is achieved by merely placing the person in the background of an illustration, or whether a sincere effort has been made to recognize contributions, achievements, and worth of people of the particular culture by depicting them as key members of our society.

B. Rules for classifying:

1. If two or more people are interacting with each other and if their interaction is the main feature of the illustration, all characters involved in the interaction are classified as central characters.
2. If other people are in the background observing the interaction of the main characters, these observers are classified as non-central characters.
3. If all characters in the illustration are engaged in the same activity, without any characters being more distinctive than others, the characters all share equal status. Classify them all as central characters.
4. If there is only one person portrayed in the illustration, this person is a central character.
5. If people of a particular culture are shown both a central and non-central role, check both columns.

Checklist

No.	Page No.	Central	Non-Central
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			

No.	Page No.	Central	Non-Central
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
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32			
33			
34			
35			
36			
37			
38			
39			
40			
41			
42			
43			
44			
45			
46			

Evaluation Worksheet

Title of book: _____

1. Total number of pictures that include people _____. (for example, 109).
2. Total number of pictures showing people of the particular culture _____. (for example, 52). This is the total of the Central and Non-Central columns in the checklist.

Technique 1: Determine Whether There Is an Adequate Percentage of Illustrations Showing People of the particular Culture.

- a. Divide the total number of illustrations showing persons of the particular culture by the total number of illustrations that include people. (item 2 divided by item 1)

In the above example, this would result in the following:

$$\frac{52}{109} = .477 \quad \text{or} \quad \begin{array}{r} .477 \\ 109 \overline{) 52.000} \\ \underline{436} \\ 840 \\ \underline{763} \\ 770 \\ \underline{763} \\ 7 \end{array}$$

- b. You obtain percentage by multiplying by 100, that is, $0.477 \times 100 = 47.7\%$

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{or} \quad 0.477 \\ \times 100 \\ \hline 47.700 = 47.7\% \end{array}$$

- c. Thus, total percentage of people of a particular culture described in this book would be 48%.

3. Check the box that corresponds to your answer.

For Resource Books

For Textbooks

70 to 100%

☐

Excellent percentage of illustrations that show people of a particular culture.

☐

50-100%

40 to 70%

☐

Standard percentage of illustrations that show people of a particular culture.

☐

20-30%

40% or less

☐

Inadequate percentage of illustrations that show people of a particular culture.

☐

Less than 20%

Technique 2: Illustrations Showing People of a Particular Culture
as Central Characters

Technique 2: Determine if there is an adequate percentage of illustrations showing people of a particular culture as central characters.

1. Look up the total number of pictures showing people of the particular culture (item 2 in the Evaluation Worksheet).
2. Divide the number of illustrations that show people of a particular culture as central characters (column 2 in checklist) by the total number of illustrations from item 1.

Example:

$$\frac{35}{52} \frac{\text{(number of check marks in the "central" column)}}{\text{(total number of pictures showing people of a particular culture)}}$$

3. Obtain percentage by multiplying by 100; for example, 67.3%
4. Check the box that corresponds to your answer:

☐ 50 to 100%
Excellent percentage of illustrations that show people of the particular culture as key figures.

☐ 20 to 50%
Standard percentage of illustrations that show people of the particular culture as key figures.

☐ Less than 20%
Inadequate percentage of illustrations that show people of the particular culture as key figures.

Technique 3: Analysis of physical features in illustrations

Technique 3: Determine if Illustrations Show a Realistic Representation of the Physical Appearance of People of the particular culture.

A. This task requires your judgment. You are asked to look at the physical characteristics and expressions of the characters illustrated. You are to judge whether people of the particular culture are shown realistically. Using the book you chose, answer the following questions by checking those characteristics which you see.

- _____ 1. The complexion color of the character(s) has warmth and liveliness --rather than appearing dull.
- _____ 2. Characters of the particular culture display more than one skin hue. (Even in the same family, people's coloring may vary).
- _____ 3. The facial features (nose, mouth, etc.) of the characters look representative of the appearance of some people in the particular culture.
- _____ 4. The hair coloring, texture, and styles appear representative of some people in the particular culture..
- _____ 5. Facial and bodily expressions of the characters appear compatible with the story situation.
- _____ 6. Illustrations, which may be cartoon, are not exaggerations that may cause a child to be embarrassed or a child from a different culture to laugh because of their demeaning nature (e.g., whites of eyes standing out to make the character look popeyed, nose spread almost the width of the face, etc.).
- _____ 7. Body "language" appears to be in motion and involved.

B. Check the box that corresponds to your answer

If you checked items 1-6 on
page check here

☐

Good treatment of people
of the particular culture

If you checked 3 of the items
check here

☐

Standard treatment of people
of the particular culture

If you were unable to check
Item 6, check here

☐

Inadequate treatment of people
of the particular culture;
reject the book

Summary: Illustration Sheet

Book Title: _____ Author _____

Publisher _____ Date _____ Location _____

Instructions: Use the results of the information on the Evaluation Worksheet to score the book you analyzed.

Area	Score	Check Appropriate Box	Points Book Received
Technique I	Illustrations Showing People of the Particular Culture	Excellent ☐ = 10 Standard ☐ = 5 Inadequate ☐ = 0	_____
Technique II	Illustrations Showing the Particular Culture in Central Positions	Excellent ☐ = 10 Standard ☐ = 5 Inadequate ☐ = 0	_____
Technique III	Illustrations Reflect Physical Appearance of People of the Particular Culture	Good ☐ = 10 Standard ☐ = 5 Inadequate ☐ = 0	_____
Stereotypes	There are no stereotypes in the book (as listed on pages 28 and 31 of this guide)	No stereotypes ☐ Stereotypes are present* ☐	
Total Score			_____

Point Range	Book Rating
24-30 =	Excellent ☐
15-22 =	Standard ☐
0-14 =	Inadequate ☐

*Reject the book if stereotypes are present.

Exercise B: Diversity Among Book Illustrations

Objective:

Learners demonstrate an understanding of the variations within the experiences of people of a particular culture by selecting books that illustrate these variations and do not have stereotypes depicted.

Resources Needed:

Worksheet entitled "Diversity in Books Illustrations" Many books about people of the particular culture. (Use the public library or the instructor's display.)

Task:

1. During a class meeting, the instructor and learners should decide whether each learner is to find books for the entire list, or whether one learner will focus on one category and select books that represent the items within it.
2. Go to the local public or school library and select children's books about people in a particular culture from the shelves.
3. Then, thumb through the books, looking carefully at the illustrations.
4. Place in a separate pile those books that satisfy the category (e.g., Male/Female Roles) and the items underneath it (e.g., professionals).
5. Then look at each book to be sure that it does not have any of the demeaning stereo-types listed earlier. If it does not, write in the book title, author, and publisher on the "Diversity Illustrated Books" sheet.
6. Share your list with other learners.

Diversity Book Illustrations

Note: When you have selected a book with good-quality, non-stereo-typical illustrations for an item, write its title in the middle column. Blank spaces have been provided for you to write in categories which you desire.

Category/Headings	Author	Title	Publisher	Date
Adminstrators M/F				
Professionals M/F				
Non-professionals M/F				
Laboring Workers M/F				
Other				

Category	Author	Title	Publisher	Date
Community Setting				
Urban				
Rural				
Suburban				
North				
South				
West				
East				
Other Category*				
Other Category*				

**Other categories may include: physical appearance, interior home settings, recreation, use of free time, etc.*

Exercise C: Follow-up Discussion

1. Bring the books to class and share them with the other learners by:
 - a. presenting an overview of each story
 - b. showing an example of the quality of illustrations
 - c. describing to what extent you were, or were not, able to locate examples to fit the category(ies) you were looking for(or)
 - d. If you identify any examples of stereotypes that you believe the other learners should be aware of in a book, taking the book to your next group meeting and discussing why you believe it is important that the book should not be placed in the classroom library.
2. Ask questions about any of the criteria for understanding illustrations that are still unclear to you.

LESSON TWO



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The Multicultural Experience: A Unique Reality

Objective One:

By participating in a series of exercises that focus on his/her own personal experiences, the learner understands that individuals and groups of people perceive situations and circumstances uniquely.

Sub-Objective:

- a. Given a common set of stimuli, learners describe their observations from their own points of view. Then they share reasons why they believe some responses were similar and others different.
- b. Each learner analyzes a child's book for its similarity to and difference from his/her own personal experience.
- c. The learner classifies personal examples into categories that are transferable to cultural groups.

Objective Two:

The learner learns to identify critical issues by looking at children's books from the perspective of a particular culture. The example provided focuses on a Black perspective by the learner

by reading an article, classifying the information into cultural group categories, and participating in group discussions about the article.

Objective Three:

The learner uses an assessment instrument to analyze the written content of children's books. The example provided focuses on the Black perspective.

Outcome 1:

The learner can express (via writing, verbalizing, or drawing) some reasons why individuals or groups of people have unique perspectives.

Outcome 2:

The learner can use an assessment instrument to analyze children's books from the perspective of a particular culture.

- a. The learner can find examples to meet the guidelines on the assessment instrument.
- b. The learner can determine whether or not a book is acceptable for use from the perspective of a particular culture.

Experience A: What Do You See - and Why?

Resources Needed:

Image (next page, or shown on overhead projector), ashtray or magazine. Large group.

3. Write below and share with the group some of the reasons you think people see things differently or similarly.

Instructions:

1. Look at the image (on the next page or on the overhead projector); then record below, or report to the group, all the things that you see.

What I see in the image:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

4. Look at the ashtray (or book or magazine) presented to you. Check the response which is appropriate to you.

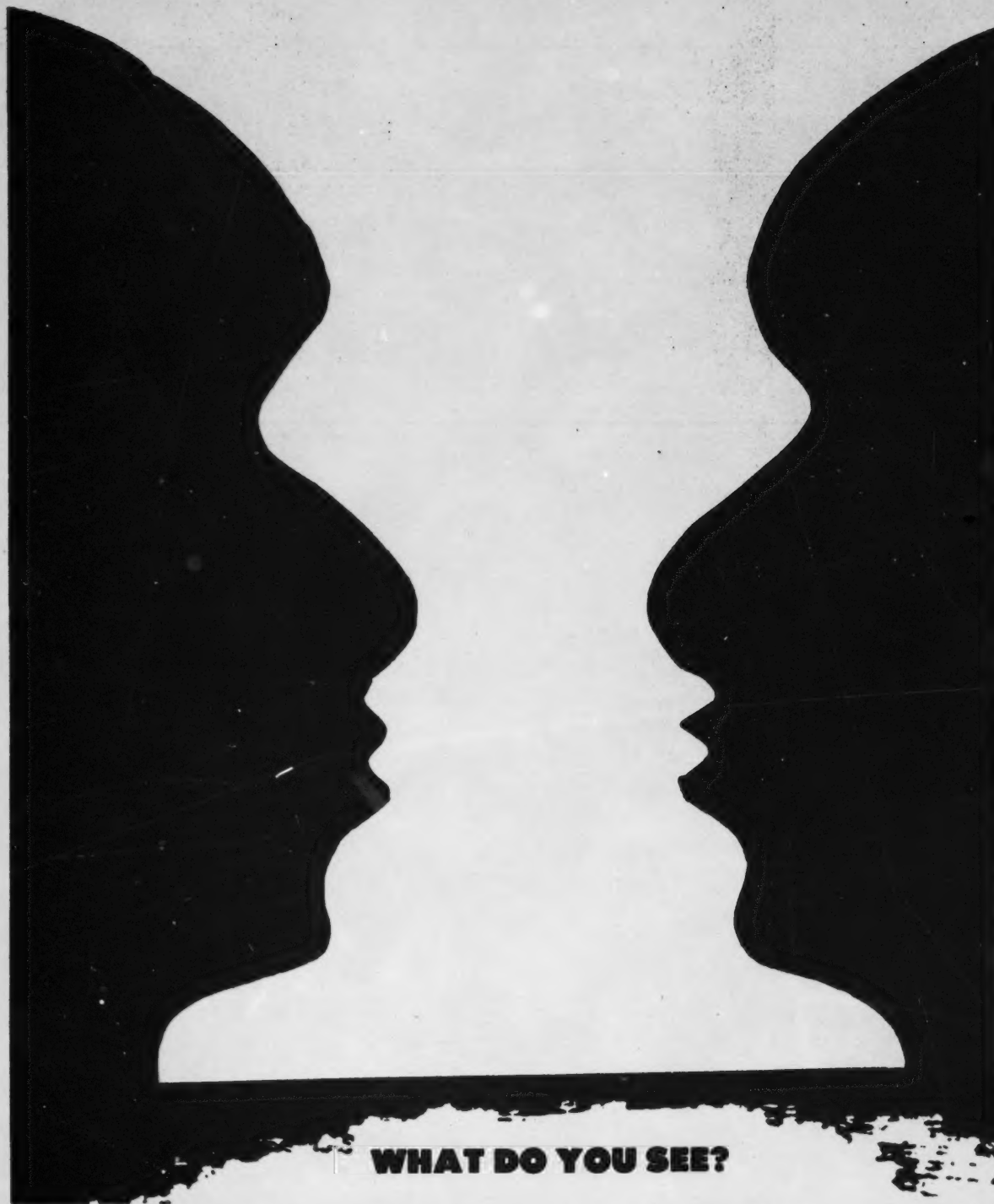
a. Is it meaningful to you? ☐

b. Is it familiar but with little meaning? ☐

c. Is it unfamiliar? ☐

2. Compare what you see with others in the group.

5. Write the reason for your response.



WHAT DO YOU SEE?

6. Share your response with other learners. List the reasons

others give for their responses as they share them.

7. Summarize your own conclusions about why different people have different perspectives (about what they see or find meaningful) by selecting

one of the following three choices to express it. (Use the space provided to write or draw your statement or tell it to the instructor and group.)

Experience C:
Using Cultural Categories to Clarify Examples of
Similarities and Differences of Personal Experiences

Task:
Working independently or in
a group, use the examples on
the similarities and differences
worksheet above to complete the
Cultural Matrix on the next page.

Instructions:

Use the written content in
the book for the information
you write about Evan's Corner.

CULTURAL MATRIX

Categories	Evan's Experience	My Experience
Personal Description		
a. name		
b. physical description		
Environmental Circumstances		
a. family composition/ structure		
b. family relationship		
c. friends (peers)		
d. housing - facility - furnishings		
e. nature of the community		
Experiences		
a. general activities		
b. hobbies, recreation, interests		
Problem Solving		
a. goals		
b. methods for resolving conflicts or dilemmas		
c. decision maker		
d. who/what contributes to the solutions		
Nature of Folkways		
a. customs		
b. habits		
c. rituals		

Experience D: Ethnic Group Realities

Resources Needed:

Cartoon ("flesh colored" bandage)

Your own Imagination

Instructions:

1. Look at the cartoon and read the caption beneath it.
2. Then answer the following questions about this cartoon (share your responses with the group):
 - a. What makes the name of the bandage inappropriate for all of the children?
 - b. What can be done to make the bandages more appropriate for each?
 - c. What other examples can you give of items or situations that take place that do not take into consideration the differences among groups of people?
 - d. Why do you believe the perspectives of different groups of people should be included in children's books?
 - e. In what way do you believe that the perspective of a particular group is, or is not, being included in children's books?

Discussion notes:

Discovering and Using the Black Perspective

Note:

During the last several experiences, you have compared your personal perspective with those of the characters in the book and of your learning group. The experiences which follow, in this lesson, are included to help you gain and use information from a Black perspective about what should be included in and excluded from children's books.

First, you will read an article that describes some considerations for looking at children's books from a Black perspective. Instructions for this activity are below.

Then you will use an assessment instrument to analyze the written content of a book for children. The instructions for this task are on page 79.

Experience E: Discovering the Black Perspective

Material Needed:

Article: "Black Perspective in Children's Books"

(See Appendix)

Study Guide Sheets, next page (optional)

Instructions:

1. Read the information in the article. Use your own preferred style for identifying and remembering the issues that are discussed.
2. You will be expected to know, from a Black perspective, some things to look for that should be included, and not included, as they relate to the cultural categories that you used on page 57.
3. To aid you, we have provided a Study Guide which you may want to use to help you retain essential information as you read. Use it if it is useful to you.
4. This lesson will be followed by a group discussion to clarify any questions you may have about the article.
5. However, if you feel that the information is clear to you, you may go ahead and answer for yourself the questions (listed on page 77). And then...
6. Use the assessment instrument by following the instructions beginning on page 78.

Study Guide Sheets

1. What information did you gain about a Black perspective in children's books related to:

What is a Black perspective?

2. What kind of information should children's books include about Black people related to...

Physical appearance?

Who is the resource for a Black perspective?

Environmental circumstances?

The kind of questions the Black child should be able to answer from reading stories from a Black perspective.

Experiences of the characters?

Conflicts, goals, and personal solutions?

Variety within the group?

Ways of doing things?

3. What kinds of things are demeaning or are stereotypes from a Black perspective?

Role models?

4. What other important information did you gain?

Experience F
Analyzing the Written Content of Children's Books Using a Black Perspective

Materials Needed:

Book: Evan's Corner

Written Content Analysis Forms
(pages 81-90)

Written Content Analysis Book
Rating Sheet (page 89)

Pencil or pen

Assignment One: Completing the
Written Content Analysis
Instrument - Level I with ac-
curacy

1. Read the instructions for use of the instrument on the next page.
2. In the Example column, write the page number where you were able to find examples of the guideline items in Evan's Corner.
3. When you have completed the forms, read the instructions for and complete the Book Rating form.
4. Then check your answers by using the Evaluation Guide.
5. Complete this assignment by discussing your responses with the instructor and other learners.
6. If you have completed the task with reasonable accuracy, go on to Assignment Two. If not, ask your instructor for another assignment so you can practice this skill again.

Assignment Two:

1. Select a partner with whom you like to work.
2. Together select a book that both of you will analyze. Work independently.
3. Follow the same procedure as in Assignment One.
4. To check the accuracy of your analysis, compare your responses (the check column, page numbers, and examples) with your partner.
5. Where there is a different point of view, ask another learner or the instructor for a third opinion.
6. The general focus for the accuracy check should be your mutual decision as to whether the book should or should not be used. Use the specifics (4. above) to determine how you came to your conclusion.

Note:

You may want to try this assignment several times until you can use the instrument with accuracy in analyzing different books. To extend your skill, try thumbing through a book without using the instrument. Give the book a general rating-Excellent, Standard, or Inadequate. Know the reasons behind your decision. Then try using the instrument to see if you arrive at the same conclusion.

Using the Written Content Analysis Instrument - Level I

This instrument focuses on six general criteria for the written content of books for and about Black people. They are: (a) the book has evidence of intent to include Black people; (b) the book includes written information about Black people; (c) the written content has a Black perspective; (d) the book avoids stereotypes; (e) the general tone of the book is positive; and (f) the book is meaningful to young children.

1. The general instructions are written on the first page of the instrument. More specific instructions for each section are provided just before each section.
2. The samples below, from Section B, indicate the way you should complete it (a) for the first assignment and (b) for general use. Use these as your guide.

For the First Assignment

Guideline Item	Check (if present)	Examples (tally or page no.)
Describes:		
1. One person and his/her experiences	✓	pp. 10,13,25
2. People in family, who they are, and number in the family	✓	pp. 1,2,14,25, 26
3. Way family members relate to each other	No evidence	

For General Use

Guideline Item	Check (if present)	Examples (tally or page no.)
Describes:		
1. One person and his/her experiences	✓	///
2. People in family, who they are, and number in the family	✓	////
3. Way family members relate to each other	None	

Instructions:

Section A: Thumb through the book quickly. Respond to Statements 1 and 2. If you have a Yes answer

for 2, continue on to Section B. If you have No answers for 1 and/or 2, turn to Section C.

Section A: There is evidence of intent to include Black people

Guideline Item	Yes	No
1. Black people are included in illustrations		
2. Information about individual, or groups of Black people is included in the written content		

Instructions:

Section B: You may use this with books about people (fact or fiction). After reading the book, make a ✓ in the Check column when you find an example of any of the guideline statements in the writ-

ten information. To determine which examples and how many examples there are, mark the Example column by (1) writing down the page numbers (e.g., 18, 21) or (2) making a tally mark (e.g., ~~||||~~)

Section B: The book includes written information about Black people in the following way(s):

Guideline Item	Check (if present)	Examples (tally or page no.)
Describes:		
1. One person and his/her experiences		
2. People in family, who they are, and number in the family		
3. Way family members relate to each other		
4. The family home (interior and exterior conditions)		
5. The community		
6. The way people do things (customs--including speaking, dressing and grooming, food and meal processes, religious practices, recreation)		
7. What people believe or think is important		
8. Relationships among Black people (e.g., peer relationships)		
9. Relationships with non-Black people		
10. Black people in areas outside the United States		
11. Contributions (e.g., peanut butter, jazz, underground railroad) of Black people to individuals, their own group, and/or society.		
12. Black person (people) who made contributions to their own people or society (e.g., George W. Carver, W.E.B. DuBois, Congressman Ron Dellums)		
13. Factual events that have taken place (e.g., Civil War, march on Washington, a Muhammed Ali fight)		
14. Occupational roles		

Instructions:

Section C: You may use this part with any book. Some of the values and behaviors desired may be demonstrated with animal or

fantasy characters, as well as people characters. Use the same instructions as those for Section B.

Section C: The written content in the book has a Black perspective

Guideline Item	Check (if present)	Examples (tally or page no.)
1. Uses the color names black and brown in positive ways		
2. Character demonstrates pride in self and in own family or group		
3. Black role models are in positions of authority (as leaders, parents, teachers, etc.)		
4. Black role models are described in occupation(s)		
5. Black role models are described making decisions		
6. Characters do things to improve selves, group, environment, and/or situations		
7. Individual characters or groups define themselves by deciding who they are		
8. Individual characters or groups define themselves by deciding what they want to be like		
9. Individual characters or groups define themselves by deciding what and how they want to do things		
10. Individual characters or groups define themselves by speaking for themselves		

Instructions:

Section D: Use the same procedure as described for Section B.

Section D: The book is demeaning to or stereotypes Black people

Guideline Item	Check (if present)	Examples (tally or page no.)
1. Descriptions of characters singing, dancing, acting as comics, etc., when the situation doesn't warrant it		
2. Describes characters as submissive and fearful without legitimate reasons		
3. Describes one Black character in an all-white setting in a contrived way (token gesture)		
4. Uses dialect language in a way that shows it to be an inferior way of speaking		
5. Shows white people solving Black people's problems		
6. Shows super-Black people		
7. Includes symbols or images that Black people (in U.S. society) find negative (e.g., buzzards, snakes)		
8. Story situation seems unreal, superficial, or phony		
9. Role models do destructive things		
10. The author makes statements that are paternalistic or condescending		

Guideline Item	Check (If present)	Examples (tally or page no.)
11. Characters feelings about situations, people or events are described (e.g., celebrations, joy, and pleasure for positive experiences versus worry, pain, or the blues for negative happenings)		
12. Characters solve problems through working together (e.g., helping each other or pooling such resources as money, time, ideas, land and/or effort)		
13. Characters solve problems through asking own group members for help		
14. Characters solve problems through protesting negative situations		
15. Characters solve problems through struggle and effort		
16. Characters solve problems through being ambitious		
17. Characters solve problems through using own creativity		
18. Characters solve problems through outwitting the more powerful, stronger, or oppressive character		
19. Characters show respect for their ancestors and the yet-unborn		
20. Demonstrates that understanding, knowledge, etc., come through doing things, not just thinking about doing or wishing		
21. The goal of efforts is for the good and/or profit of the group or team rather than for specific individuals		
22. The author is Black		

Instructions:

Section E: Use your own personal opinion to respond to the following statements. If you wish, make notes in the Comments column to support your point of view.

Section E: The general tone of the book makes me feel positive

Guideline Item	Yes	No	Comments
1. Book is sensitive and respects the way Black people do things			
2. Black characters are shown in adequate and enhancing ways			
3. Book uses dialect speech or slang expressions to illustrate the richness of the language facility of Black people			
4. Other			
5. Other			

Instructions:

Section F: Read the book to one or more children.

Section F: The book is meaningful to children

Guideline Item	Yes	No	Comments
The book includes material that is meaningful to the children with whom I work:			
1. The setting is similar to the child's			
2. The situations are related to those that these children experience			
3. The situations are related to those that Black people face in the local community			
4. Children find the book interesting			
5. Children discovered unfamiliar experiences or found the situation interesting			
6. Characters are likeable. The children want to identify with them			

Book Rating Sheet

Book Title _____ Author _____

General Instructions:

You will need your Written Content Analysis forms to complete this task. For each area, total the number of items checked on your forms. Then, for each guideline area, circle the appropriate section in

the matrix below, according to the number of checks on the form. This will tell you how each section is rated. Turn to the next page to summarize the total book rating.

Guideline Area	Area Rating		
	Inadequate	Standard	Excellent
A. Evidence of intent to include Black people	No evidence	In illustrations	In illustrations and written content
B. Book informs about Black people	No items checked	1-5 items checked	More than 5 items checked
C. Written content has a Black perspective	No items checked	1-6 items checked	More than 6 items checked
D. The book stereotypes Black people*	One or more items checked	No items checked	No items checked
E. The general tone is positive	No items checked	One item checked	More than one item checked
F. The book is meaningful to children**	No items checked	1-2 items checked	More than 2 items checked

*Any book that stereotypes Black people should probably not be used.

**If children do not find a book meaningful or interesting, try using it another way--or select only those books to which they are attracted.

Total Book Rating Summary

This book is:

☐ Excellent: It should be used and shared with others

A. D and F are circled standard or excellent

B. There are more "excellents" circled than any other rating

☐ Standard: It should be used along with other, more complete resources

A. D and F are circled standard or excellent

B. There are more "standards" circled than any other rating

☐ Inadequate: Its use should not be continued if:

A. Inadequate is marked for D

B. Inadequate is marked for F

C. There are four or more inadequate markings

Experience G: Evaluation Guide

1. After you have finished your analysis of Evan's Corner, compare your complete Written Content Analysis - Level I form with the one filled in by the developer. (See Appendix)
2. Check each page separately.

Give yourself credit for each portion of task completed correctly.

Use the matrix on the next page as a guide to the number of points that you give yourself.

EVALUATION GUIDE

SECTION	ITEM COMPLETED	POSSIBLE POINTS	MY POINTS
1st page	Top of page completed correctly	5	
	The theme statement seems similar	2	
Section A	"Yes" is marked twice	2	
Section B	Checks equal 9	9	
	I have most of the same page numbers listed	4	
Section C	Checks equal 11	11	
	I have most of the same page numbers listed	4	
Section D	Checks equal 1	2	
Section E	Checks equal 2	2	
Section F	The number of checks will vary according to the children's response	3	

I have completed this form:

Total Points _____

33-43+ = well
 22-32+ = with standard performance
 1-21 = with evidence that I should try again

Experience H: On Your Own

1. After you have reached standard performance on the Evaluation Guide, use the same procedure for another book.
2. The book you select should be a book about some particular culture other than the Black culture (this will give you a wider variety of experience).
3. Work with other learners to analyze other books so that you can develop a list of books for use in a multicultural classroom.

Written Content Analysis - Level I

Book Title _____ Author _____

Particular Culture Included _____

Publisher _____ Place _____ Date _____

Check the correct response(s)

The material is: factual _____ fiction _____ fantasy _____

folktale _____ other (write in) _____

The theme of the book is: _____

General Instructions:

1. Read over the instrument and become familiar with the instructions and the guideline items you are to consider for each section.
2. Skim the book quickly. Then complete the top portion of this page.
3. Next, read the book more thoroughly. Then complete
4. When you have finished the analysis, rate the book by completing the Total Book Rating Summary.

each section of the instrument by following the instructions for that section. As you become familiar with the instrument, you can begin to look for responses to the guideline items as you read the book.

Total Book Rating Summary

This book is:

☒ Excellent: It should be used and shared with others

A. D and F are circled standard or excellent

B. There are more "excellents" circled than any other rating

☐ Standard: It should be used along with other, more complete resources

A. D and F are circled standard or excellent

B. There are more "standards" circled than any other rating

☐ Inadequate: Its use should not be continued if:

A. Inadequate is marked for D

B. Inadequate is marked for F

C. There are four or more inadequate markings

Instructions:

Section A: Thumb through the book quickly. Respond to Statements 1 and 2. If you have a Yes answer for 2, continue on to Section B. If you have No answers for 1 and/or 2, turn to Section C. (Note that for each section "___ people" refers to the particular culture being studied.)

Section A: There is evidence of intent to include ___ people.
(fill in)

Guideline Item	Yes	No
1. ___ people are included in illustrations		
2. Information about individual, or groups of ___ people is included in the written content		

Instructions:

Section B: You may use this with books about people (fact or fiction). After reading the book, make a ✓ in the Check column when you find an example of any of the guideline statements in the written information. To determine which examples and how many examples there are, mark the Example column by (1) writing down the page numbers (e.g., 18, 21) or (2) making a tally mark (e.g., IIII)

Section B: The book includes written information about _____ people in the following way(s): Note that for each section "_____ people" refers to the particular culture being used.

Guideline Item	Check (if present)	Examples (tally or page no.)
Describes:		
1. One person and his/her experiences		
2. People in family, who they are, and number in the family		
3. Way family members relate to each other		
4. The family home (interior and exterior conditions)		
5. The community		
6. The way people do things (customs--including speaking, dressing and grooming, food and meal processes, religious practices, recreation)		
7. What people believe or think is important		
8. Relationships among _____ people (e.g., peer relationships)		
9. Relationships with non-_____ people		
10. _____ people in areas outside the United States		
11. Contributions (e.g., peanut butter, jazz, underground railroad) of _____ people to individuals, their own group, and/or society.		
12. _____ person (people) who made contributions to their own people or society (e.g., _____ (add names)		
13. Factual events that have taken place (e.g., _____ (add events)		
14. Occupational roles		

Instructions:

Section C: You may use this part with any book. Some of the values and behaviors desired may be demonstrated with animal or

fantasy characters, as well as people characters. Use the same instructions as those for Section B.

Section C: The written content in the book has a (fill in) perspective

Guideline Item	Check (if present)	Examples (tally or page no.)
1. Uses skin color names in positive ways		
2. Character demonstrates pride in self and in own family or group		
3. ____ role models are in positions of authority (as leaders, parents, teachers, etc.)		
4. ____ role models are described in occupation(s)		
5. ____ role models are described making decisions		
6. Characters do things to improve selves, group, environment, and/or situations		
7. Individual characters or groups define themselves by deciding who they are		
8. Individual characters or groups define themselves by deciding what they want to be like		
9. Individual characters or groups define themselves by deciding what and how they want to do things		
10. Individual characters or groups define themselves by speaking for themselves		

Guideline Item	Check (if present)	Examples (tally or page no.)
11. Characters feelings about situations, people or events are described (e.g., celebrations, joy, and pleasure for positive experiences versus worry, pain, or the blues for negative happenings)		
12. Characters solve problems through working together (e.g., helping each other or pooling such resources as money, time, ideas, land and/or effort)		
13. Characters solve problems through asking own group members for help		
14. Characters solve problems through protesting negative situations		
15. Characters solve problems through struggle and effort		
16. Characters solve problems through being ambitious		
17. Characters solve problems through using own creativity		
18. Characters solve problems through outwitting the more powerful, stronger, or oppressive character		
19. Characters show respect for their ancestors and the yet-unborn		
20. Demonstrates that understanding, knowledge, etc., come through doing things, not just thinking about doing or wishing		
21. The goal of efforts is for the good and/or profit of the group or team rather than for specific individuals		
22. The author belongs to the particular culture depicted in the book.		

Instructions:

Section D: Use the same procedure as described for Section B.

Section D: The book is demeaning to or stereotypes _____ people
(fill in)

Guideline Item	Check (if present)	Examples (tally or page no.)
1. Descriptions of characters singing, dancing, acting as comics, etc., when the situation doesn't warrant it		
2. Describes characters as submissive and fearful without legitimate reasons		
3. Describes one _____ character in an all-white setting in a contrived way (token gesture)		
4. Uses dialect or accented language in a way that shows it to be an inferior way of speaking		
5. Shows white people solving _____ people's problems		
6. Shows super- _____ people		
7. Includes symbols or images that people (in U.S. society) find negative; e.g., _____, _____ (fill in)		
8. Story situation seems unreal, superficial, or phony		
9. Role models do destructive things		
10. The author makes statements that are paternalistic or condescending		

Instructions:

Section E: Use your own personal opinion to respond to the following statements. If you wish, make notes in the Comments column to support your point of view.

Section E: The general tone of the book makes me feel positive

Guideline Item	Yes	No	Comments
1. Book is sensitive and respects the way _____ people do things			
2. _____ characters are shown in adequate and enhancing ways			
3. Book uses dialect speech or slang expressions to illustrate the richness of the language facility of _____ people			
4. Other			
5. Other			

Instructions:

Section F: Read the book to
one or more children.

Section F: The book is meaningful to children

Guideline Item	Yes	No	Comments
The book includes material that is meaningful to the children with whom I work:			
1. The setting is similar to the child's			
2. The situations are related to those that these children experience			
3. The situations are related to those that _____ people face in the local community			
4. Children find the book interesting			
5. Children discovered unfamiliar experiences or found the situation interesting			
6. Characters are likeable. The children want to identify with them			

Book Rating Sheet

Book Title _____ Author _____

Particular culture focus: _____

General Instructions:

You will need your Written Content Analysis forms to complete this task. For each area, total the number of items checked on your forms. Then, for each guideline area, circle the appropriate section in

the matrix below, according to the number of checks on the form. This will tell you how each section is rated. Turn to the next page to summarize the total book rating.

Guideline Area	Area Rating		
	Inadequate	Standard	Excellent
A. Evidence of intent to include _____ people	No evidence	In illustrations	In illustrations and written content
B. Book informs about _____ people	No items checked	1-5 items checked	More than 5 items checked
C. Written content has a _____ perspective	No items checked	1-6 items checked	More than 6 items checked.
D. The book stereotypes _____ people*	One or more items checked	No items checked	No items checked
E. The general tone is positive	No items checked	One item checked	More than one item checked
F. The book is meaningful to children**	No items checked	1-2 items checked	More than 2 items checked

*Any book that stereotypes Black people should probably not be used.

**If children do not find a book meaningful or interesting, try using it another way--or select only those books to which they are attracted.

Total Book Rating Summary

This book is:

☐ Excellent: It should be used and shared with others

A. D and F are circled standard or excellent

B. There are more "excellents" circled than any other rating

☐ Standard: It should be used along with other, more complete resources

A. D and F are circled standard or excellent

B. There are more "standards" circled than any other rating

☐ Inadequate: Its use should not be continued if:

A. Inadequate is marked for D

B. Inadequate is marked for F

C. There are four or more inadequate markings

APPENDIX

A. BLACK PERSPECTIVE IN BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

B. DEVELOPER'S ANALYSIS OF "EVAN'S CORNER"

BLACK PERSPECTIVE IN BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

"I, too, sing America. I am the darker brother."
 "(America never was America to me)"**

These lines from two poems by Langston Hughes indicate the dichotomy of American life for black Americans. They suggest what "blackness" should mean in the context of American life, and what it does mean. Neither message is new. Every leading spokesman of every generation of black Americans has revealed the depths of bitterness engendered by the frustration of being the darker brother in a white America. Only recently, however, have we begun to face the difficult fact that "whiteness" is still



Judith Thompson, a former high school English teacher, is currently chairman of the Education Committee, Lawrence Douglas County NAACP.



Gloria Woodard was until recently an elementary school teacher in Lawrence, Kansas, and now lives in Washington, D.C.

the major criterion for full participation in American life. W.E.B. DuBois emphasized the extent of this condition when he depicted the black American as born into

...a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of looking at one's self through the eye of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity.***

Our increased awareness of these facts puts a new responsibility on all of us concerned with children's literature. It points to the necessity to re-examine children's books about black Americans, and to begin from a fresh standpoint. We can be glad that the days of direct caricature are behind us, but a less obvious misrepresentation is widespread in children's books

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*Langston Hughes. "I, Too, Sing America," in The Weary Blues, Knopf, 1926.

**Langston Hughes. "Let America Be America Again," Esquire Magazine, July 1936.

***W.E.B. DuBois. "Souls of Black Folk," in Black Voices, edited by Abraham Chapman, Mentor, 1968.

today. We must ask to what extent and by what means have narrow ethnic attitudes pervaded books about black Americans, even those books specifically written "to further interracial harmony"? We must ask whether these books are providing meaningful identification for black children, as well as real insight for white children into the historical, ethnic, and cultural characteristics of black Americans. Finally, we must frankly ask whether the image of the

white American has been made to seem more desirable than that of the black American in these books.

The popularized slogans "Black Pride," "Black Power," and "Black Is Beautiful" are based on the most universal concern of man: identity. They deal with the eternal questions--who am I, where did I come from, where am I going? Of the two literary genres, fact and fiction, it is the fiction which is too



"Stevie...provides black ghetto children with identification. (John Steptoe) simply presents a problem familiar to all children--the intrusion of a younger child on a small boy's time, friends and family..."

often irrelevant and inadequate as a guide to answering these questions for black children. The histories and biographies are illuminating black experience: the fiction is not. The histories are providing identification and inspiring pride, in self, in ethnic group, in African heritage; the fiction is not.

The research required of a writer of non-fiction partially explains this. It must be granted that to have been, and to be, a black in America is a unique and perhaps unprecedented human and historical experience. As an ex-slave advised Julius Lester in his introduction to To Be A Slave, "If you want Negro history, you will have to get it from somebody who wore the shoe and by and by...you will get a book."* Whether a writer is white or black, if he immerses himself in the history of a period or in the life of a man, he must to some degree "wear the shoe" to report the experience accurately.

Fiction demands a similar kind of "self-consciousness." As James Baldwin puts it. "One writes out of one thing only--one's own ex-

perience."** The credentials of the writer who undertakes a book about blacks must include a black perspective based on an appreciation of black experience. "Good Intentions" are not enough. The writer of books about black children must understand the importance of ethnic consciousness before writing about the goal of ethnic irrelevancy. Conscious of the inequities suffered even after many blacks became "just plain Americans," blacks today refuse to erase the "black" from black American. They refuse to make invisible that one attribute which connotes their unity, culture, and heritage. Certainly, integration and assimilation are not possible until the recognition of and respect for these differences are fully realized.***

Hopefully, we can all learn to "wear the shoe," actually or vicariously, but we are not all qualified to write about what we learn. It is this combination of black consciousness and creative ability which will finally result in good books about black children. When a writer lacks these credentials, the result is too

*Julius Lester. To Be A Slave. Dial Press, 1968.

**James Baldwin. "Autobiographical Notes," in Black Voices.

***Author's note: It is important to recognize that Black people are moving from the objectives of integration and assimilation toward the goal of liberation (see page 154 in this guide). "...for the Black man to support the norms and values of the larger society means to support his own inferiority. ...the Black community must define what is 'good' and desirable and what is 'bad'...from the standpoint of its own interests and conditions of its existence. ...the healthiest line of development for the Black man would be toward group solidarity and cohesion and the sense that being a Black man has positive value." Edward Barnes, et al., Black Psychology, Harper & Row, 1972 (p. 176).

often a kind of verbal minstrel show--whites in blackface--rather than the expression of a real or imagined experience derived from wearing the shoe.

Too many of the integrated books or books for "interracial harmony" tend to reinforce the very attitudes they are trying to dispel. In too many of these books the white child dominates the story. He is the controlling factor, the active character. The focus of the story is on his character development. The black child is then necessarily placed in a subservient role. He is the passive character. He is the problem which causes the white child to act. He literally and figuratively waits for the white child to invite him in, to figure things out, to be enlightened. In short, the black child is the problem: the white child has the problem.

In Fun For Chris, by Blossom Randall, Chris the white boy is shown in a fully depicted environment, complete with understanding mother, doting grandmother, lovely home, fenced-in backyard with all the childhood toys: swing, sandpile, ladder, etc. Toby, the Negro boy, is a shadow in comparison. We are told he is older than Chris; he refers to a mother for whom he runs errands: he teaches Chris to build sandcastles, and he is, as Chris discovers, "brown all over." Other than these few references to a life, family, and environment of his own, Toby has no identity except as Chris' playmate, as the beneficiary of Chris' largesse, for which he waits every day, sitting outside the gate.

It is not what is said about Toby that raises objections to this book, it is what is omitted. The story gives a white child no insight into the real life of a black child, and it gives a black child no real reflection of himself. The perspective is that of a white world, a world in which the black child is an outsider who endures while the world decides his fate. Told from such a perspective, all the explicit explanations of human equality or racial irrelevancy cannot rise above the implicit inferences of white "superiority."

In the many books for older readers dealing with racial conflicts--in schools, the ghetto, "white" neighborhoods, at the swimming pool, etc.--the implications of white superiority take several forms. In these books, rarely are blacks depicted as effecting the changes that affect them. In fact, the blacks in these stories are represented as ineffective, whether as individuals, American citizens, or an ethnic group. They neither protest, demand, or even suggest that changes be made. Moreover, they are often made to blame themselves rather than society for the various conditions of extreme poverty, segregation, or social ostracism. Nor do these books present a coalition of black and white working to effect changes--a cooperative endeavor based on mutual respect. Instead, the happy ending or successful endeavor is usually due to the intervention of a white benefactor.

In Call Me Charley, by Jesse



"Charming and individualized black children are the central characters...in Sam by Ann Herbert Scott..."

fact that he is dark and has short hair.

The objections are to the subtle and probably unconscious perspective which presents a young black girl in terms of self-hatred and a feeling that white is preferable to dark. On page one, fourteen-year-old Emma introduces herself to us in terms of self-worthlessness: "I always tell myself, since you quit school in the 6th grade, you'll never be anything but a scrub girl at the Magnolia Motel." Her sense of identity is sharply circumscribed by her employment throughout the book: "You'll just have to try to be the best scrub girl there is," she reminds herself repeatedly and in various ways. When the priest conducts the annual blessing of the sugar

cane harvest, Emma comments: "it made me feel like I was made special by God and real important to Him even if I was just a scrub girl." Finally, she is overcome by a feeling of nostalgia when her father relates the "good old days" of picking sugarcane: "I wish I'd lived then... I'd be a field hand instead of a scrub girl." Not only is it unrealistic for a young girl to identify herself entirely and on all occasions in terms of her occupation, it is an exaggeration which turns the admirable traits of endurance and perseverance into a mere caricature.

The glorification of poverty has been a familiar theme in children's books throughout the ages. One immediately thinks of Louisa May Alcott's Little

Women or Dickens' Christmas Carol as two examples. Both books provide children with a dramatization of how, with courage and high optimism, people can overcome or cope with the indignities and deprivations that poverty can engender. The writer who undertakes the description of such a situation, however, walks a thin line between developing characters who courageously make the best of a bad situation, and characters who, by their reaction to this situation, glamorize abject poverty.

Evans Corner, by Elizabeth Starr Hill, a book for younger readers, succeeds in walking this line, and the result is an intimate story about a back boy whose yearning to find a corner of his own in the midst of a large family in small quarters is immediately recognized as a universal one. The focus of the story, however, is not on the family's impoverished condition, but on the personal problem of the child and his solution to it. The book reveals a sensitive understanding of children and their need for

When Gabrielle had finished most of her turnip, trying to look as if she liked it, Selena's father said, "Now it's time to clear the table and do the dishes,

Selena." "But I haven't had any dessert," complained Gabrielle. "Why, you know we always have chocolate ice cream for dessert on Thursday, and you don't eat chocolate ice cream," said Selena's father just as a large helping was put in front of him. "I don't?" said Gabrielle. "Never!" said Selena's father. "You haven't eaten chocolate ice cream since your last birthday party, when it made you sick." "Maybe I'd like it now," said Gabrielle. "Maybe I could try a little bit."



"The better books...lead children naturally to the conclusion that differences--in personality, abilities, background--are desirable among people."

both a corner and companionship. It also reveals an understanding of the ghetto situation, in which some ingenuity is demanded for one to find a corner of his own.

A book for older readers, Roosevelt Grady, by Louisa Shotwell, however, involves an entire family's search for a corner of its own, a "Promised Land...a place where everybody can be somebody." It is the story of a black migrant worker's family and its search for security and stability--a job, a home, a school. Patience, courage, endurance, and optimism are present as characteristics of the Grady family. But, despite its good intentions, this book reinforces stereotyped beliefs about Negroes as a race, rather than individualized solutions to universal problems. The idea on which the story is based suggests that blacks do not have very high expectations, ambitions, or ideals. Furthermore, the situations the family encounters are always appalling; the response of the characters is inappropriately cheerful. In short, the story depicts people striving for, settling for, and reacting with enthusiasm to subhuman conditions.

At one point in the story, the family finds itself occupying the attic floor of a house "with a roof so low and sloping that most places...even a nine-year-old could easily bump his head" and with windows filled with dust and cobwebs, and with drawers and cots to sleep on that "smell of dirty clothes and dust." Stock responses come from each member of the

Suddenly the two little girls looked at each other and started to laugh. And their laughter sounded in the night like silver bells beneath the streetlights beneath the stars beneath the soft black sky.



*From Gabrielle and Selena
by Peter Desbarats*

family. From Mama: "Those dormer windows give our attic a real glory." From six-year-old Matthew, "as he wrinkled up his nose and sniffed at the smell of dirty clothes and fish": "It's a satisfactory smell. I like it."

It is this vast discrepancy between situation and response, between event and reaction, that results in characterization wholly unrealistic. The nine-year-old hero, Roosevelt, responds similarly to an authoritarian, brow-beating teacher: "Maybe she...wasn't such a bad teacher after all...even if she did teach with a stick... Maybe the Opportunity Class was a good place for bean-pickers. A place where they could

find out things. If they asked." These words of apology, justification, and self-recrimination are spoken by a black character, but the words are white. If a black child were to identify with this boy, he would have to incorporate in his perception of life that 1) being beaten or abused by a teacher is an acceptable practice; 2) there is a caste system in our democracy, which, if you are of a minority--bean-picker or black--means there are specially designated, circumscribed facilities for you; and 3) if you don't get an education under these conditions, it's your own fault. You didn't ask the right questions.

At the end of the story, Mama's dream of a Promised Land is supposedly fulfilled in the attainment of a remodeled bus with cold running water and a little potbellied iron stove to keep them through winters known to be so harsh that their white benefactor cautions them: "Nobody has stayed in one of these buses all through to spring, but that's no reason you shouldn't try." The mother's response is not mild relief, but tearful joy: "I like it fine, Roosevelt...All I don't like is thinking about when ...we have to leave all this behind."

In a land of opportunity and a multi-million dollar economy, is it realistic to depict a family finding happiness and fulfillment in the attainment of less than substandard housing? The mother's high optimism should

be inspiring; but if the final outcome for this family is considered fortunate, the optimism here borders on simple-mindedness, and the final conclusion the reader makes about these people is the racist platitude: "It sure don't take much to make them happy."

A Fair Judgment?

The question sometimes arises as to the legitimacy of any kind of literary judgment which takes sociological or historical factors into account. The British author John Rowe Townsend states that:

to assess books on their racial attitude rather than their literary value, and still more to look on books as ammunition in the battle, is to take a further and still more dangerous step, from literature-as-morality to literature-as-propaganda--a move toward conditions in which, hitherto, literary art has signally failed to thrive.*

In part, one must agree with Mr. Townsend's thesis. Books should not be evaluated only in terms of the racial attitudes presented in them. In fact, it would be better if books were not written for the sole purpose of presenting certain racial attitudes. When the principal concern of literature becomes polemics and manifestos, idea replaces characterization, and the reader leaves the book with a slogan rather than an experience. And whether that

*John Rowe Townsend. "Didacticism in Modern Dress." The Horn Book Magazine, April 1967.

in real life. The literature that will truly give black children a sense of identity will not be literature-as-morality nor literature-as-propaganda, but literature as human experience. To black children, blackness is an intrinsic and desirable component of that human experience.

The better books depict black children as individuals whose identity includes name, home life, family, friends, toys, hobbies, etc. In addition, they are black, American, and first-class citizens. These books lead children naturally to the conclusion that differences--in personality, abilities, background--are desirable among people. Books of this sort which have already been published include the "interracial" Gabrielle and Selena, by Peter Desbarats, and Hooray for Jasper, by Betty Horvath. Charming and individualized black children are the central characters in the Ezra Jack Keats books, The Snowy Day, Whistle for Willie, Peter's Chair, and A Letter to Amy, as well as in the books Sam and Big Cowboy Western, by Ann Herbert Scott, and What Mary Jo Wanted and What Mary Jo Shared, by Janice May Udry. Books like these, on this level, should be so numerous that children will not be able to browse through a library shelf without finding one there.

One limitation to most of these books, however, is their emphasis on, identification with, and relevance only to middle-class children. For too many black children, they depict an environment removed from their immediate experience. Stevie,

a recently published book by a young black writer, John Steptoe, provides black ghetto children with identification. The writer simply presents a problem familiar to all children--the intrusion on a younger child on a small boy's time, friends, and family and his ambivalent feelings about the situation. To this extent, the book reflects no peculiarly black perspective. Identification for the young black reader rests in the central character's intimate knowledge of the black subculture--his use of informal grammar and idiom, his loosely structured family life, his sophistication and independence in worldly matters, and his brief sketches of the kinds of good times city children make for themselves--from the familiar game of cowboys and Indians to the less usual experience remembered nostalgically by Robert: "And that time we was playin' in the park under the bushes and we found these two dead rats and one was brown and one was black."

The value of such a book is that it assures the ghetto child that he, too, is visible--that he is important enough to be reflected in that literature which has always been made to seem too cultured to admit him.

Behind the Magic Line, by Betty K. Erwin, and Soul Brothers and Sister Lou, by Kristin Hunter, are among those few books for older readers (9-16) which reveal, in fictional terms, some degree of black consciousness. Neither one is entirely successful, but they can be considered a step from the white perspective of reality--a view

from inside the individual personalities of the characters.

Behind the Magic Line is a humanistic story about a young black girl, "her dreams and determinations." Throughout the book, there is an emphasis on black pride and human dignity. Flaws in the book include underdeveloped characters and Hollywood touches of fortunate coincidences, as well as those overworked ingredients: the fatherless family, the matriarch, the son who is in trouble with the law. However, this book does attempt to give motivation for each of these phenomena, motivation which puts the blame not on the individuals, but on an employment system which perpetuates the fatherless family, on the traditional tendency to place undue suspicion on members of the black community and on racist individuals who still think black means slave. As in Roosevelt Grady, the final situation the family finds itself in is hardly cause for rejoicing, but members of the family seem to realize this and their reactions are ambivalent.

In Soul Brothers and Sister Lou, the ghetto culture is graphically depicted and the main character and her search for self-identity are realistic. The drawbacks lie in the one-dimensional treatment of the minor characters, an unrelenting series of melodramatic situations, a hastily compiled ending, and a kind of immediacy of response to pleasure and pain that cheats the reader of the experience of real tragedy. These flaws weigh more heavily for some readers than for others, but many readers can use this story as a bridge from pure

pulp fiction to the excellent black fiction written for adults.

The timeliness of these books compensates in part for their weaknesses. The relief these books provide from white paternalism, white perspective, and white domination is an important compensation for many black children.

The bulk of that literature which provides identification for black children has so far been confined to the histories, biographies, and autobiographies. To date, informational, biographical, historical, and scientific books are far superior to the fictional works. Documentary materials are now being collected and edited with the young reader in mind. Skillful organization, careful research, and clarity of style may be found in such excellent books as Julius Lester's To Be A Slave, Dorothy Sterling's Tear Down the Walls, and William L. Katz's Eyewitness: The Negro in American History. These books clearly answer the question of black identity, not only for young black readers, but for young readers of every ethnic background, and for us, their older counterparts--uninformed or misinformed as we have been.

In addition to these general histories, many of the recently published biographies of individual black Americans can be highly recommended. These range from the brief biographical sketches designed for middle and upper elementary grades (e.g. Lift Every Voice, by Dorothy Sterling and Benjamin Quarles) to such fully developed biographies as Langston Hughes,

by Milton Meltzer, Journey Toward Freedom: The Story of Sojourner Truth, by Jacqueline Bernard, and Captain of The Planter by Dorothy Sterling. Fictionalized histories and biographies include Emma Gelder Sterne's, The Long Black Schooner; The Voyage of The Amistad, Ann Petry's Tituba of Salem Village, and Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad. Four anthologies designed for the young adult reader which span history, fiction, and poetry are Chronicles of Negro Protest by Bradford Chambers; Black on Black: Commentaries by Negro Americans, edited by Arnold Adoff; Black Voices: An Anthology of Afro-American Literature, edited by Abraham Chapman; and I Am the Darker Brother, poems by black Americans, edited by Arnold Adoff.

Although the criteria for heroism are indeed variable, in re-evaluating biographies for children, it can readily be seen that the blacks recognized in children's literature in the past were usually those who attained some success by adhering to white values. Today it is important for children to know about Denmark Vesey and W.E.B. DuBois as well as Ralph Bunche, and George Washington Carver. These biographies give children historical perspective relating to recent human rights movements, and a link to the autobiographical revolutions of modern heroes: Malcolm X, Eldridge Cleaver, and Martin Luther King. These books, as well as autobiographies such as Anne Moody's Coming of Age in Mississippi (which traces the experiences of a

young black girl from her childhood in the South to her activities as a young student in the civil rights movement), show that militancy is not a fad.

The significance of these histories and biographies cannot be stressed enough. The contributions of Afro-Americans to American history have heretofore been distorted or excluded; and can we ever fully realize the loss of identity that generations of blacks have experienced by being deprived first of their original culture and then of any recognition of their contributions to the culture that was thrust upon them? Excellent books such as these recapture to some degree that consciousness of heritage for the present generation of children.

The details of black history cannot be skipped over by any of us concerned with children's literature. The evaluation of children's books implies judgment, and a valid or educated judgment is made from experience. The more profound the experience, the better the judgment. Until now, we have all learned only a portion of our nation's history, but in order to be good book critics as well as whole Americans, we must learn the rest.

Only a detailed knowledge can provide us with the perspective necessary for building totally new understandings and relationships. To quote James Baldwin:

For history...is not merely something to be read. And it does not refer merely,

or even principally, to the past. On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is

literally present in all that we do. It could scarcely be otherwise, since it is to history that we owe our frames of reference, our identities, and our aspirations.*

Experience F:
Identifying Some Guidelines for Analyzing
Children's Books by Using a Black Perspective

Instructions:

Using the information you have read and information which you have acquired elsewhere, suggest some guidelines you believe should be considered when analyzing

children's books from a Black perspective. (Share your list and the reasons for the guidelines with the group.)

1. I believe the following points should be included:

2. I believe the following things should be omitted:

*James Baldwin. "Unnameable Objects, Unspeakable Crimes," in Black on Black; Commentaries by Negro Americans, ed. by Arnold Adoff, Macmillan, 1968.

Lesson Two**Written Content Analysis - Level 1**Book Title Even's Corner Author Elizabeth Starr HillPublisher Holt, Rinehart and Winston Place New York, N. Y. Date 1967

Check the correct response(s)

The material is: factual _____ fiction ✓ fantasy _____
 folktale _____ other (write in) _____

The theme of the book is: a boy feels the need for privacy. With his mother's suggestion, and through much personal effort, he resolves this dilemma. However, he discovers that he doesn't feel satisfied until he helps his mother.

General Instructions:

1. Read over the instrument and become familiar with the instructions and the guideline items you are to consider for each section.
2. Skim the book quickly. Then complete the top portion of this page.
3. Next, read the book more thoroughly. Then complete each section of the instrument by following the instructions for that section. As you become familiar with the instrument, you can begin to look for responses to the guideline items as you read the book.
4. When you have finished the analysis, rate the book by completing the Total Book Rating Summary.

Instructions:

Section A: Thumb through the book quickly. Respond to Statements 1 and 2. If you have a Yes answer

for 2, continue on to Section B. If you have No answers for 1 and/or 2, turn to Section C.

Section A: There is evidence of intent to include Black people

Guideline Item	Yes	No
1. Black people are included in illustrations	X	
2. Information about individual, or groups of Black people is included in the written content	X	

Instructions:

Section B: You may use this with books about people (fact or fiction). After reading the book, make a ✓ in the Check column when you find an example of any of the guideline statements in the writ-

ten information. To determine which examples and how many examples there are, mark the Example column by (1) writing down the page numbers (e.g., 18, 21) or (2) making a tally mark (e.g., IIII)

Section B: The book includes written information about Black people
in the following way(s):

Guideline Item Describes:	Check (if present)	Examples (tally or page no.)
1. One person and his/her experiences	✓	total book
2. People in family, who they are, and number in the family	✓	7
3. Way family members relate to each other	✓	7 son and mother; 10 at dinner; 13 children
4. The family home (interior and exterior conditions)		
5. The community	✓	6 newsstand; 27 p th yard; 37 day care
6. The way people do things (customs--including speaking, dressing and grooming, food and meal processes, religious practices, recreation)	✓	
7. What people believe or think is important	✓	1 Evan wants his own place
8. Relationships among Black people (e.g., peer relationships)		
9. Relationships with non-Black people	✓	24 grocer; 30
10. Black people in areas outside the United States		
11. Contributions (e.g., peanut butter, jazz, underground railroad) of Black people to individuals, their own group, and/or society.		
12. Black person (people) who made contributions to their own people or society (e.g., George W. Carver, W.E.B. DuBois, Congressman Ron Dellums)	✓	p. 9 mother gives idea to son
13. Factual events that have taken place (e.g., Civil War, march on Washington, a Muhammed Ali fight)		
14. Occupational roles	✓	7 mother is domestic worker

Instructions:

Section C: You may use this part with any book. Some of the values and behaviors desired may be demonstrated with animal or

fantasy characters, as well as people characters. Use the same instructions as those for Section B.

Section C: The written content in the book has a Black perspective

Guideline Item	Check (if present)	Examples (tally or page no.)
1. Uses the color names black and brown in positive ways		
2. Character demonstrates pride in self and in own family or group	✓	39
3. Black role models are in positions of authority (as leaders, parents, teachers, etc.)	✓	9, 39 mother
4. Black role models are described in occupation(s)		
5. Black role models are described making decisions	✓	9, 39 mother; 19 I need some more
6. Characters do things to improve selves, group, environment, and/or situations	✓	Total story is about Evan fixing his corner; 42 Evan helps brother
7. Individual characters or groups define themselves by deciding who they are		
8. Individual characters or groups define themselves by deciding what they want to be like		
9. Individual characters or groups define themselves by deciding what and how they want to do things	✓	15 made picture
10. Individual characters or groups define themselves by speaking for themselves		

Guideline Item	Check (if present)	Examples (tally or page no.)
11. Characters feelings about situations, people or events are described (e.g., celebrations, joy, and pleasure for positive experiences versus worry, pain, or the blues for negative happenings)	✓	17, 18 enjoying peace and quiet
12. Characters solve problems through working together (e.g., helping each other or pooling such resources as money, time, ideas, land and/or effort)		
13. Characters solve problems through asking own group members for help	✓	9
14. Characters solve problems through protesting negative situations		
15. Characters solve problems through struggle and effort		
16. Characters solve problems through being ambitious	✓	21 flower 24 30-37
17. Characters solve problems through using own creativity	✓	pp. 30-37
18. Characters solve problems through outwitting the more powerful, stronger, or oppressive character	✓	same as above
19. Characters show respect for their ancestors and the yet-unborn		
20. Demonstrates that understanding, knowledge, etc., come through doing things, not just thinking about doing or wishing		
21. The goal of efforts is for the good and/or profit of the group or team rather than for specific individuals	✓	same as above
22. The author is Black	unknown	

Instructions:

Section D: Use the same procedure as described for Section B.

Section D: The book is demeaning to or stereotypes Black people

Guideline Item	Check (if present)	Examples (tally or page no.)
1. Descriptions of characters singing, dancing, acting as comics, etc., when the situation doesn't warrant it		
2. Describes characters as submissive and fearful without legitimate reasons		
3. Describes one Black character in an all-white setting in a contrived way (token gesture)		
4. Uses dialect language in a way that shows it to be an inferior way of speaking		
5. Shows white people solving Black people's problems		
6. Shows super-Black people		
7. Includes symbols or images that Black people (in U.S. society) find negative (e.g., buzzards, snakes)		
8. Story situation seems unreal, superficial, or phony		
9. Role models do destructive things		
10. The author makes statements that are paternalistic or condescending		

NO EVIDENCE

Instructions:

Section E: Use your own personal opinion to respond to the following statements. If you wish, make notes in the Comments column to support your point of view.

Section E: The general tone of the book makes me feel positive

Guideline Item	Yes	No	Comments
1. Book is sensitive and respects the way Black people do things	✓		
2. Black characters are shown in adequate and enhancing ways	✓		Adequate - The way the family relates seems almost too perfect
3. Book uses dialect speech or slang expressions to illustrate the richness of the language facility of Black people	DOESN'T APPLY		
4. Other			
5. Other			

Instructions:

Section F: Read the book to one or more children.

Section F: The book is meaningful to children

Guideline Item	Yes	No	Comments
The book includes material that is meaningful to the children with whom I work:			
1. The setting is similar to the child's			
2. The situations are related to those that these children experience			
3. The situations are related to those that Black people face in the local community			
4. Children find the book interesting	✓		
5. Children discovered unfamiliar experiences or found the situation interesting			
6. Characters are likeable. The children want to identify with them	✓		

Book Rating Sheet

Book Title Evan's Corner

Author Elizabeth Starr Hill

General Instructions:

You will need your Written Content Analysis forms to complete this task. For each area, total the number of items checked on your forms. Then, for each guideline area, circle the appropriate section in

the matrix below, according to the number of checks on the form. This will tell you how each section is rated. Turn to the next page to summarize the total book rating.

Guideline Area	Area Rating		
	Inadequate	Standard	Excellent
A. Evidence of intent to include Black people	No evidence	In illustrations	In illustrations and writer content
B. Book informs about Black people	No items checked	1-5 items checked	More than 5 items checked
C. Written content has a Black perspective	No items checked	1-6 items checked	More than 6 items checked
D. The book stereotypes Black people*	One or more items checked	No items checked	No items checked
E. The general tone is positive	No items checked	One item checked	More than one item checked
F. The book is meaningful to children**	No items checked	1-2 items checked	More than 2 items checked

*Any book that stereotypes Black people should probably not be used.

**If children do not find a book meaningful or interesting, try using it another way--or select only those books to which they are attracted.